

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MAINE**

STATE OF MAINE,

Plaintiff,

v.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE and BROOKE ROLLINS,
in Her Official Capacity as Secretary of
Agriculture,

Defendants.

No. 1:25-cv-00131-JAW

DECLARATION OF SHIELA CORLEY

I, Shiela Corley, hereby declare as follows pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746:

1. I hold the position of Chief of Staff for the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services subagency of the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”). The USDA’s Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services oversees federal nutrition assistance programs. Nutrition assistance programs funded by Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services are administered at the state, territory, tribal, or local levels. I have held the position of Chief of Staff for the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services since February 2025, and have worked for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services since 2018. I have worked for USDA in various capacities since 1995.

2. I am aware of the above-captioned proceeding and have reviewed the Verified Amended Complaint. I make this declaration in support of Defendants’ opposition to the State of Maine’s Motion for Emergency Temporary Restraining Order. *See* Dkt. #3, Apr. 7, 2025. By virtue of my training and experience, I am familiar with the programs experiencing recent funding suspensions. I make this declaration based on

my personal knowledge and experience.

3. The programs at issue are as follows: (a) the Farm to School State Formula Grant; (b) Child Nutrition Technology Innovation (TIG) Grants; (c) State Administrative Funds; (d) School Meal Equipment Grants; (e) Child and Adult Care Food Program Sponsor Administrative Funds; (f) State Administrative Funds for the Summer Food Service Program; and (g) Child and Adult Care Food Program “Cash in Lieu.” I am personally familiar with each grant program by virtue of my employment and experience working for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services. With only one possible exception, the programs at issue are not used to purchase food for children.

4. **The Farm to School State Formula Grant.** The amount currently frozen for this program is \$592,838.42. However, the funds are not used or intended to be used to purchase food. The specific objectives of this funding are, instead: (a) to build and increase the capacity of participating institutions to procure and use local food in program meals; and (b) to provide agricultural education opportunities for participating children. Activities conducted by States to support farm to school may include but are not limited to local food procurement capacity building and coordination (such as value chain coordination, grower/buyer matching tools, etc.), training and technical assistance for local producers and program operators, local food promotional and educational activities for participating institutions and children (such as Harvest of the Month promotions or “crunches”), and outreach to local producers or participating institutions not engaged in farm to school. States may directly fund State-level farm to school staff and projects and may choose to provide funds to partner organizations to conduct allowable activities, or to participating institutions, through contracts, subrecipients, or incentive payments.

5. **Child Nutrition Technology Innovation (TIG) Grants.** These grants provide funding to every state, Indian tribal organization, and territory administering these programs, supporting planning and implementation activities aimed at improving efficiency, accountability and overall program integrity. States can use the funds to conduct feasibility studies, review data and processes, assess training needs, and plan for automation projects. Implementation efforts may include developing web-based software, improving system interfaces, purchasing technology and hardware, hiring specialized contractors, and training staff and local operators. The amounts currently frozen for this program are \$117,405.30, \$101,111.38, and \$698,507.00. These funds are not used or intended to be used to purchase food.

6. **State Administrative Funds.** These funds may be used by State agencies to pay salaries, including employee benefits and travel expenses for administrative and supervisory personnel, for support services, for office equipment, and for staff development, particularly for monitoring and training of food service personnel at the local level in areas such as food purchasing and merchandizing. Such funds shall be used to employ additional personnel, as approved in the applicable State plan to supervise, improve management, and give technical assistance to school food authorities and to institutions in their initiation, expansion, and conduct of any programs for which the funds are made available. State agencies may also use these funds for their general administrative expenses in connection with any such programs, including travel and related expenses. Additional personnel or part-time personnel hired are expected to meet professional qualifications and to be paid at salary scales of positions of comparable difficulty and responsibility under the State agency. Personnel may be used on a staff year equivalent basis, thus permitting new personnel and existing

staff to be cross-utilized for most effective and economical operation under existing and new programs. The amounts currently frozen for this program are \$68,951.23, \$25,950.00, and \$374,753.89. In addition, \$122,572.93 exists in Fiscal Year 2024 Q3 funds which are not to be distributed. These funds are not used or intended to be used to purchase food.

7. **School Meal Equipment Grants.** These grants are provided to States to make subgrants to local educational agencies and schools to purchase the equipment needed to serve healthier meals, improve food safety, and to help support the school breakfast program. Local operators—including local education agencies, school food authorities, and schools—apply and are awarded funding to purchase equipment with a value of greater than \$1,000. Since their inception, these grants have played an important role in helping schools modernize kitchen operations, store and prepare local foods, and serve healthier scratch-cooked meals. Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services requires that State agencies and local operators follow federal and state procurement regulations which ensures responsible stewardship of federal funds while improving school nutrition. The amount currently frozen for this program is \$37,544.00. These funds are not used or intended to be used to purchase food.

8. **Child and Adult Care Food Program Sponsor Administrative Funds.** These funds are used to make administrative payments to day care home sponsoring organizations to help offset administrative costs. Federal reimbursement is based on the number of homes claimed multiplied by the rate established by the Federal government each year. The amounts currently frozen for this program are \$71,135.00 and \$2,047.00. These funds are not used or intended to be used to purchase food.

9. **The State Administrative Funds for the Summer Food Service**

Program. These are administrative funds paid to employ State personnel, including travel and related expenses, and to supervise and give technical assistance to sponsors in their initiation, expansion, and conduct of any food service for which program funds are made available. State agencies may also use administrative funds for such other administrative expenses as are set forth in their approved Program management and administration plan. The amount currently frozen for this program is \$77,949.30. These funds are not used or intended to be used to purchase food.

10. Child and Adult Care Food Program “Cash in Lieu” Payments.

The only grant funding which can be used for purposes of purchasing food is the Child and Adult Care Food Program “Cash in Lieu” Program. For each school year, the State of Maine may, upon application to Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services prior to the beginning of the school year, elect to receive cash in lieu of donated foods for use in nonresidential childcare or adult care institutions participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. It must then promptly and equitably disburse any cash received in lieu of donated foods to eligible program schools, service institutions, and nonresidential childcare institutions, as applicable. The funds are only to be used to purchase United States agricultural commodities and other foods for use in their food service under the National School Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, or Summer Food Service Program, as applicable. For the “Cash in Lieu” program, \$49,188.60 remains frozen and \$24,200.00 exists in Fiscal Year 2024 Q3 funds which are not to be distributed. By comparison, in Fiscal Year 2024, the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services distributed to the State of Maine \$40,294,374.00 in total USDA funds allotted for food, labor, and other indirect expenses; the State thereafter only used \$35,734,264.59 of those funds.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: April 9, 2025

/s/ Shiela Corley *Shiela Corley*
Shiela Corley
Chief of Staff
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services
United States Department of Agriculture

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on April 9, 2025, I caused the foregoing to be electronically filed with Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which sent such notice to any individuals and entities who have entered appearances in this case to date, pursuant to the Court's ECF system.

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Acting United States Attorney

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